



# Cobham and Downside Residents' Association Newsletter, Spring 2022

## CDRA Open Meeting and AGM

**Wednesday 30th March, Cobham Village Hall  
7.15pm for refreshments, meeting at 8pm**

Guest speakers, Alistair Mann, Chairman of the Cobham Chamber of Commerce, who will talk about his plans for Cobham High Street post Covid and a police officer from the Elmbridge Neighbourhood Team



## YOUR FUND

We are delighted to be able to tell you about our progress in our bid for funding from Your Fund Surrey (YFS) to deliver a new skate park to replace the existing one on the edge of the Leg O'Mutton field which is no longer fit for purpose. We have been asked, in fact encouraged, by Surrey County Council to move to the next stage of the application process and prepare our Full Submission. We are partnering in the project with Cobham Football Club who are applying to rebuild their clubhouse and changing rooms and so together we have established a Community Interest Company (CIC), named the Cobham Village Partnership.

So now the serious work begins – the scope and depth of detailed information required by the YFS team is quite daunting to say the least! While the Cobham Village Partnership will manage the Full Submission process and then manage and deliver the projects, we need input from the people who will benefit from the funding. We are therefore in the process of contacting and engaging with those in the community who have specialist knowledge and experience, in order that we can draw up technical plans, obtain quotes, produce project plans, and hopefully submit a successful bid for funding.

We are fortunate also in having received support

and guidance from both local and county councillors.

If you would like to be part of this exciting project please email [info@cdra.co.uk](mailto:info@cdra.co.uk)

## SANDY LANE

We reported on our campaign to get improvements to Sandy Lane in our autumn newsletter. After consultation with residents we had identified the need to repair/replace the tarmac surface where needed, improve pedestrian access along the length of the lane, reduce the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph (without the need for street lighting), and improve the Sandy Lane junction with the A244. At the time of our last newsletter, Surrey Highways had already done work to improve the flooding issues.

We are delighted that further works have now been approved with £110k allocated in the budget over the next two years. The contract for clearing the overgrown vegetation near Sandringham Park, to open up an informal footpath towards Reed's School, has also been awarded. Work has not yet commenced, but will be completed before the end of this financial year.

We would like to thank Councillor David Lewis, for his help in working with us on this project.

**Dilip Mathew and Brian Teale**



**From the Chairman...** I am delighted that we will be able to hold our Open Meeting and AGM on the 30th March, now that the Covid levels have dropped. Our speakers will be Alistair Mann, chair of the Cobham Chamber of Commerce, who will be talking about the High Street post Covid and a police officer from the Elmbridge Neighbourhood Team. You can find more details, including timings on the front page of this newsletter. We look forward to our meetings being held in the Village Hall in the future!

At an EGM in November we received approval from members for proposed changes to our constitution and to increase the membership subscription to allow us to expand our activities. Thanks to all of you who either attended the Zoom meeting or voted by post and we look forward to another successful year ahead.

We are fortunate that some of our Elmbridge and Surrey councillors attend our monthly committee meetings, allowing regular and direct feedback in both directions. It allows CDRA to be highly effective in supporting our members and the wider community. As ever, we appeal to our members to help deliver our programme by joining our committee. It is a rewarding way to support your community and fresh ideas and communicators are always welcome.

We have built up a portfolio of projects which are described in more detail in this newsletter, but they are all linked by our aspiration to improve our local environment and attract Council and other grant funding into Cobham and Downside.

We will continue to support and advise residents on planning matters as requested. We are supporting residents at Plough Corner to resolve regular flooding and working for improvements to Sandy Lane.

On a strategic level we will continue to lobby on behalf of Cobham and Downside on the impact of the Wisley Airfield development and the Highways Agency regarding M25 J10 work. We will continue to make representations to preserve Cobham and Downside as part of Esher and Walton Parliamentary Constituency by defending our important historic community connections with Stoke D'Abernon and Oxshott against the Boundaries Commission proposals to transfer Cobham and Downside to a new Weybridge and Chertsey constituency.

We have formed valuable alliances with other local groups as necessary to maximise our influence with our MP and Surrey and Elmbridge Councils. **Steve Wood, Chairman**

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

It's been a busy period for public transport!

South Western Railway introduced a new timetable with effect from 21st February, 2022. As regards services to/from Cobham and Stoke D'Abernon, there is no change to service frequency.

Cobham's Chatterbus introduced a new Monday - Friday service (C3) on 4th January, 2022. This provides more middle-of-the-day services to/from the station, as well as serving Cobham Health Centre and Cobham Free School (main

site) for the first time. See their website for full details. Please do all you can to support it!

Surrey County Council has bid for around £50 million over three years under its Bus Service Improvement Plan. In the proposal, bus services are divided into categories, with the highest category deemed the priority for funds. Both the 715 and 408 routes are in the highest category. It is quite possible, however, that not all of this money will be forthcoming. We wait and see.

For some time we have been urging the County Council to provide real time passenger information (RTPI) at more bus stops. A board is now in place at the Kingston-bound bus stop

opposite Cobham Health Centre. The next stop in Cobham to receive one will be the stop outside Sainsbury's Local in the High Street. At present it is awaiting cabling work.

You can find out live bus times on your phone or laptop by typing in 'nextbuses.mobi'. This then allows you to type in the location of the stop (e.g. Cobham Waitrose) which will bring up the expected departure time of the bus you require.

Lastly, there is a new bus stop outside 'The Ivy' (see opposite). This is for Chatterbus, 408 and 513 services and is for a six-month trial period. So, if you are using the bus, and this is convenient for you, do remember it's there!

## LOCAL PLAN

We understand that the draft Local Plan will finally be released by Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) in March, subject to approval by full Council on 22nd March. We should have sight of it week commencing 7th March, when the agenda for the meetings are posted on-line. Unfortunately, this is just too late to allow details to be included in this newsletter, but we will notify those of you on email of its contents.

It is expected that 6800 homes (453 per annum) will be targeted over the 15 year period of the plan rather than the 9600 (641 per annum) proposed previously, using the Government's Standard Method of assessing housing need. Councillors of all political persuasion across our borough now appear aligned in their desire to see no green belt released and a reduction on the housing targets from the Government's Standard Method of assessing housing need. This follows persistent and coordinated lobbying by CDRA and other local groups. The plan has been a political football for the last six years. We hope those days are now over and EBC will unite behind a sustainable vision which safeguards Elmbridge's future.

If approved, the Local Plan will be issued for final public representations over a 6 week period. These will be limited in scope, but for the first time we will see specific sites identified for development. After the local authority elections in May the final draft will be submitted to an

inspector appointed by the Secretary of State to examine the plan's soundness and logic against national policy. We believe this may commence in June of this year with adoption of the final Local Plan in 2023.

CDRA will continue to lobby EBC to optimise an environmentally and economically sustainable Local Plan for the next 15 years. In particular, we are working hard to ensure that the community has a voice in its preparation, the land it requires, and the policies that will govern it.

There have never been more than 350 homes built in any year in Elmbridge, so 453 will be a major challenge, and as yet there is no indication how many will be affordable. The impact on the character of individual areas of the borough will be significant and CDRA have lobbied hard for community involvement in preparing Design Codes for our individual character areas. While this has been successful, and consultation has started, we are concerned that individual character areas have not yet been identified. This is crucial to successful integration of the increased housing targets. **Steve Wood**



*The new bus top outside The Ivy*

## ENVIRONMENT

We told you in our last newsletter about our successful application for 200 free hedge saplings from the Woodland Trust, which we planted in May 2021 on the Leg O' Mutton field. Despite being planted late in the season (due to Covid delivery issues) the young saplings were nurtured through the summer with regular watering and grass trimming.

As a result of the success of this initial project, which received much positive local comment, we applied for more saplings from the Woodland Trust later in 2022. Once again our application was successful and another 200 were delivered and planted in December last year and here is now a substantial row of saplings running alongside the allotments and community garden. In time they will produce an attractive hedge of dog rose, hawthorn, hazel, crab apple and dogwood – and more importantly provide a haven for wildlife and year round colour.

Many thanks to all those who volunteered to help with the planting – as the saying goes, many hands make light work!

Working with the Tree Officer at Elmbridge Borough Council, we are continuing our work to reduce the number of mature trees that are cut down as part of the many developments in the area. Research is showing that each person needs a certain number of mature trees to provide vital oxygen. This now considered just as important as pollution reduction and carbon capture which makes environmental considerations an important part of the planning process. **Martin Elbourne, Denise Stanwyck**

### Cobham Community Garden

Cobham Community Garden is opening up on March 5th 2022 for the 2022 growing season. We open every Saturday morning between 10am and 12 noon and are located behind the allotments on the Leg O'Mutton Field in Cobham. The community garden is for all ages and abilities. If you have moved to a flat and miss the garden, or just need some company and some outdoor exercise, you will get a warm welcome. Why not join us? – unlike your own garden there is no regular commitment and we share the produce.

email: [hello@cobhamcommunitygarden.org.uk](mailto:hello@cobhamcommunitygarden.org.uk)  
or visit [www.cobhamcommunitygarden.org.uk](http://www.cobhamcommunitygarden.org.uk)  
for more information.



*Volunteers planting the second batch of 200 saplings*

## 2022 MEMBERSHIP DUE

Membership for 2022 is now due and at just £7.50 per year it is cheaper than other comparable local groups. Thanks to those of you who have already joined for this year, but if you have not already joined there will be a membership form with this newsletter, giving details of how to do so. The easiest method is using Paypal on our 'JOIN' page on our website [www.cdra.co.uk](http://www.cdra.co.uk) or scan the QR code on the right.

